

AMERICAN DRAGON
"SOMETHING FISHY THIS WAY COMES"
777A-206

FADE IN:

INT. SCHOOL - PROFESSOR ROTWOOD'S CLASSROOM - DAY

ON PROFESSOR ROTWOOD - standing at the blackboard, drawing crude ocean waves as he lectures his class.

PROFESSOR ROTWOOD
Waaaaa-ter. It covers two-thirds
of the earth's surface. Does it
therefore hold two-thirds of the
world's magical creatures in its
depths? We can draw but one
conclusion...

TILT DOWN TO REVEAL a homemade ROTWOOD BOBBLEHEAD DOLL (made of school supplies and smuggled cafeteria food) sitting on Spud's desk. Spud's hands manipulate the doll to make it bobble and "talk."

SPUD (O.S.)
(whispered, as "Rotwood")
...I have a chimichanga for a head.
Now watch me dance.

REVERSE - JAKE and TRIxie try to stifle the laughter as Spud makes the Rotwood doll dance around.

JAKE/TRIXIE
<stifled laughter>

TRIXIE
(whispered)
That Rotwood bobblehead is for
serious messed up, Spud.

JAKE
(whispered)
Yeah, but you got the voice all
wrong. Check this.

Jake moves the bobblehead to his desk and makes it "talk."

JAKE
(whispered, as "Rotwood")
You kids wanna see magical
creatures? Check out all the nasty
nose trolls and backdoor gas
monsters I got in my--

PROFESSOR ROTWOOD (O.S.)
 Jake Long thinks he is in puppetry
 class then, hmm?!

JAKE
 <surprised yell>

WIDER - Rotwood is standing right behind Jake. The professor
 bends over and picks up the bobblehead.

PROFESSOR ROTWOOD
 I was quite the puppeteer back in
 my day, too, Mr. Marionette Mockery
 Man. Shall we see if I've still
 got it?
 (working the bobblehead,
 with a higher voice)
 Jake Long! Principal's office!
 Now!

SPUD
 <busts up laughing, re: Rotwood>
 Now that dude has got the voice
down!

JAKE - slouches down in his seat - busted.

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SCHOOL - PRINCIPAL DERCETO'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Jake slouches in a chair in Derceto's office.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO (O.S.)
 This is your 37th trip to my office
 in the year I've been here, Jake.

WIDER - Jake sits across from PRINCIPAL DERCETO, who's behind
 her desk and seated in her wheelchair. A MANILA FOLDER is on
 her desk.

JAKE
 Yeah, I don't wanna tell you how to
 do your job, but Rotwood needs some
 serious anger management training
 if he's gonna be around kids.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO
 It isn't just Professor Rotwood.
 Your grades are slipping, there's
 been a huge uptick in absences and
 tardies...

Derceto takes the manila folder and opens it, reading.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO
I've read your permanent record.
You weren't always like this.
What's happened to you this past
year?

JAKE - getting nervous - not liking where this is going.

JAKE
It's uh, been, you know, lots of...
changes...

TWO SHOT - Derceto closes the folder onto her lap and wheels
around to Jake's side of the desk.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO
Well it's high time you changed
back. And I'm afraid I'm going to
have to talk to your parents about
how to do just that.

JAKE
My parents?! You can't! I--

Jake's gaze is distracted by:

ON THE WINDOW - FU DOG pops up into the frame momentarily, as
if bouncing on a trampoline. He points to Jake, then drops
back out of frame.

JAKE
Fu?

PRINCIPAL DERCETO
Excuse me?

JAKE
(covering)
I was just saying, "Phew! I sure
am glad we're having this talk!"

PRINCIPAL DERCETO
No, you said "Fu." There was
clearly no "yuh" sound in the
middle.

ON THE WINDOW - Fu bounces up again, this time beckoning Jake
outside with his finger.

*
*

*
*
*

*

JAKE

Uh-- I think there's a problem I
may need to--

*
*

PRINCIPAL DERCETO

We're not done here, Mr. Long.
Your parents need to know--

JAKE

Yeah, I'm sure they'd love to chat,
but my parents are out of town at
some junior genius convention for
my little sister. It's just me and
Gramps kickin' it around the house,
and--

*
*
*
*
*

ON THE WINDOW - Fu bounces up again, holding a sign that says
in large bold letters: "NOW!" He points to it emphatically.

*
*

JAKE

Aw man...

(to Derceto)

I really gotta go. Sorry, Ms. D.

*

ON THE WINDOW - One more bounce from Fu, posing like a
cheesecake swimsuit model, winking and waving seductively.

JAKE

(disgusted)

So very, very sorry.

Jake hurries out. Derceto frowns, then opens back up her
manila folder.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO

I'm sorry too, Jake. But something
here is very wrong...

ON THE FOLDER - inside is a smiling PHOTO of Jake clipped to
his permanent record.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO (O.S.)

And it's about time I found out
what it is.

SMASH TO:

OPENING TITLES

ACT ONE

EXT. BASE OF THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE - DAY

ESTABLISHING - Jake, Trixie, Spud, Fu and GRANDPA at the edge *
of the East River, by the base of the Brooklyn Bridge.

GRANDPA
I have received a most distressing *
message from the East River
mermaids.

ON TRIxie - looking down at the East River in disgust.

TRIXIE
So now what? We gotta go divin' in
New York's funkier swimmin' hole?

GRANDPA
I expect our transport to the
mermaid city will arrive shortly.

SPUD - as if he's heard the voice of God.

SPUD
There's a mermaid... city? *
(to self) *
Could the bedtime stories Nana used *
to tell me be true? Could there *
really be such a magical place? *

THE RIVER'S SURFACE - churns and bubbles as a LARGE TRANSPORT *
BUBBLE rises from below. A hatch opens for entry.

SPUD *
It's true, Nana! And I'm going! *

REACTION SHOTS - all stare at Spud, who gets self-conscious. *

SPUD *
I was just... trying out a new "go *
team" action catchphrase. *
(off their stares) *
So that one's a "no" then. *

CUT TO:

EXT. MERMAID CITY - MOMENTS LATER

ESTABLISHING - a shimmering underwater city, the center of
which is encased in an enormous bubble. The transport bubble
glides down to dock with this city bubble.

JAKE (V.O.)
 You can't just pull me out of
 Derceto's office like that, Gramps.

*
 *

The transport bubble gets absorbed into the city bubble,
 leaving the gang inside.

INT. MERMAID CITY - CENTRAL BUBBLE - CONTINUOUS

Grandpa and Jake lead the group up the seashell-paved entry.

JAKE
 I get enough hassle from you. I
 don't need any more from school.

*
 *

GRANDPA
 I am sorry, Jake, but sometimes the
 needs of others must come before
 your own. Follow me.

*
 *
 *

Trixie and Fu follow. Spud trails behind, rushing over to
 look at new sights through the bubble.

*
 *

SPUD
 It's as beautiful as I always
 dreamed it would be! <giggles>
 Look at that! And that! And that
 and that and that and--

*

Spud points sharply on every "that," each time poking a SMALL
 LEAK in the city bubble. He finally notices.

SPUD
 Oh, smack.

WIDER - The group is approached by the mermaid SILVER (from
 "The Hunted"). In b.g., Spud tries to plug holes -- a finger
 here, a hand there, a foot here, the other foot there...

*

SILVER
 Jake! I'm delighted to see you
 again!

*

JAKE
 Yo, Silver! How's it going with
 your whole "fear of water" thing?

*
 *

SILVER
 Not so good. I had a bit of a
 relapse.

*
 *

QUICK CUT TO:

*

INT. MERMAID RESTAURANT - DAY

Silver sits at a restaurant table. A MERMAID WAITER pours water from a pitcher to refill her glass.

MERMAID WAITER
Top off your water, ma'am?

Silver looks at the trickling water and freaks, her scream <SHATTERING> every glass and window in the restaurant.

SILVER
<piercing scream>

QUICK CUT TO:

INT. MERMAID CITY - CENTRAL BUBBLE - BACK TO SCENE

SILVER
But I've got a good job in
mermaid/drylander relations now.
That's why they sent me to tell you
about our kelpie problem.

JAKE
Well, you can set it to "chill,"
Sil. Your kelpie problem is my "no
problem." Now... what's a kelpie?

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. MERMAID SECURITY BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

ON A HOLOGRAPHIC PROJECTION - a KELPIE (a nasty, "Creature From the Black Lagoon"-type beast) <RIPS> free of its chains, swatting away the MERMAID GUARDS trying to subdue it. The creature <SCREECHES> horribly, like nails on a chalkboard.

SILVER (V.O.)
This is security footage of the
Kelpie's escape from our prison a
year ago. As you'll see here...

The holographic Kelpie sinks its teeth into the arm of one of the guards. Almost immediately, the Kelpie MORPHS into an exact double of the mermaid guard.

SILVER (V.O.)
 It's a shapeshifter of the order
 Vampirimorphus, able to absorb the
 form and power of any magical
 creature on which it feeds.

*

WIDER - Jake, Grandpa, Fu, Trixie and Silver watch the
 projection. The Kelpie <SLAPS> the guards away with its
 mermaid tail, then swims away to freedom, letting loose one
 more horrible <SCREECH> as it leaves. Everyone winces.

Silver cuts off the projection.

FU DOG
 Yeesh. Not much of a karaoke voice
 on that one, huh?

SILVER
 Many of our best mermaid detectives
 have spent the past year tracking
 the Kelpie down, but--

JAKE - waves a hand, cutting her off with false modesty.

JAKE
 I feel you, Silver. Not everybody
 can hack it like I mack it. The
 AmDrag is here for you.

*

SILVER
 Actually, we called you down here
 to warn you. There's been a flurry
 of Kelpie attacks around your
 neighborhood recently. We think it
 may have found out what you are,
 and it's looking to feed on your
 dragon power.

*
*
*
*
*
*

JAKE
 Whoa, rewind and remix. This thing
 wants to eat me so it can be me?

*

TRIXIE
 That's just nasty. I don't even
 like tasting homeboy's cooking, let
 alone his torso.

SILVER
 He won't actually eat you. He'll
 just slowly drain your essence with
 his bite, eventually leaving your
 lifeless husk of a body behind.

*
*
*
*
*

(MORE)

SILVER (cont'd)
 (off everyone's disgust)
 Oh. That's not much better, is it?

*
 *

Grandpa starts to exit, beckoning for Jake to follow.

GRANDPA
 Come, Jake. We have much work to
 do.

They start to exit, but Trixie looks around, confused.

*

TRIXIE
 Spud...? Where'd that boy go?

*
 *

CUT TO:

*

EXT. MERMAID CITY - CENTRAL BUBBLE - SAME

*

Spud's body is contorted, trying to plug the multiple holes
 he's poked. One gushing hole left. He looks around,
 helpless, then finally sticks his whole head in to plug it.

*
 *
 *

REVERSE - Spud's underwater head takes in the sights.

*

SPUD (W/UNDERWATER SFX)
 Sooo beauuuutifuuuul!

*
 *

CUT TO:

INT. GRANDPA'S SHOP - REAR - DAY

Jake and Trixie lay on the floor in the back of the shop,
 each reading a THICK BOOK. Spud and Fu are <TYPING> away on
 a laptop and desktop computer, respectively.

SPUD
 And did you know that in
 Mermopolis, you can fall asleep
 every night to the songs of passing
 dolphins? Look, I found an MP3.

He hits a key, and the room is momentarily blasted with
 <DOLPHIN CHITTER>.

SPUD
 It's like music that only my heart
 understands...

JAKE
 Enough with the freaky mermaid
 obsession, Spud!

*
 *
 *

SPUD

It's not an obsession! It's a normal, healthy interest in another culture.

*

(then, noticing something)
<gasp!> They have seahorse petting zoos!

Grandpa's voice calls from the front of the store.

GRANDPA (O.S.)

<Chinese ranting, then> Why am I hearing dolphin songs? It is a Kelpie we are after!

JAKE

We're on it, Gramps!
(to Trixe and Spud)
F'real, I'm getting punked here. My folks are out of town. We should be out all night partying, playing video games, y'know, whatever. Instead I'm stuck in here looking up Kelpie facts for Old Man "The Needs of Others Must Come Before Your Own." Why's he always gotta come on so hardcore?

*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*

SPUD

Maybe he should take a nice relaxing trip to Mermopolis. Hey, we could all go! I'll start packing.

He starts to gather things up, but no one's paying attention.

TRIXIE

If you ask me, what the dude needs is a girlfriend.

*

JAKE

<laughs, then> Yeah, that'd be perfect! Hook him up with some honey, pretty soon he'd have no time to be stealin' away my time. Too bad there's no way to--

*
*
*
*
*
*

FU DOG (O.S.)

Oo-hoo-hoo, sorry ladies. There's only so much Fu to go around.
<sexy growl>

Jake, Trixie and Spud's heads turn to see:

FU DOG - typing away at the computer, not noticing Jake, Trixie and Spud coming up right behind him. Jake leans in to read the screen over Fu's shoulder. *

JAKE
"MagicMate - The World's Only
Online Magical Dating Service?"

FU DOG *

I gotta tell ya, it's way easier *

than dating was in the old days... *

CUT TO:

EXT. MEDIEVAL JOUSTING GROUNDS - DAY

FU DOG - in a full suit of armor, sitting on a PONY and holding a lance.

REVERSE - a massive BLACK KNIGHT on a massive BLACK HORSE. The black horse <BREATHES HOT STEAM>.

ON FU - include a DOG PRINCESS smiling at Fu and waving a pink handkerchief. Fu looks at the princess, the knight, the princess, then back to the knight.

FU DOG
Keep her.

He drops the lance, hops off the pony and runs away.

FU DOG
<cowardly running away yell>

CUT TO:

INT. GRANDPA'S SHOP - REAR - BACK TO SCENE

Fu points to the screen, showing the kids.

FU DOG
You just put in a little something
about yourself...

TRIXIE
(reading from the screen)
"Purebred Airedale Terrier with 15
years service in Her Majesty's
Royal--"

FU DOG
 Heh-heh. I must've been...
 entering that for... someone else.
 Anyway, then you tell 'em what
 kinda dame you're looking for, and
 palookazoom! Instant Lovey-Dovey.

Jake slides the keyboard over and starts typing as he talks.

JAKE
 Soooo if I was to say I was, for
 example, "a manly hunk of Chinese
 Dragon looking for a little spicy
 chow mein to noodle around with..."

FU DOG
 Why would you...? Ohhh, kid. I
 don't know if Gramps wants to get
 back into the swingin' singles
 scene.

*

JAKE
 Maybe not, but it's what he needs.
 And I'm supposed to be all about
 taking care of other people's needs
 first, right?

*

*

*

*

Jake <CLICKS> "Send Profile." A <DOORBELL> takes us to...

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. LONG APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jake sits at the coffee table, books open in front of him.
 The <DOORBELL RINGS> repeatedly.

GRANDPA (O.S.)
 Jake? Aren't you going to answer
 that?

JAKE
 You know I'd love to, Gramps, but I
 gotta study up on that Kelpie.

Jake grins as Grandpa enters, grumbling, to answer the door.

GRANDPA
 <Chinese muttering, then, opening
 the door> Yes?

REVERSE - an OLD TROLL HAG stands unsmiling.

OLD TROLL HAG
Well? You got flowers for me?

GRANDPA
Excuse me?

OLD TROLL HAG
I gotta show up on your doorstep
for a date, I expect at least some
posies for my troubles.

GRANDPA
"Date?"

OLD TROLL HAG
<groan> Forget it. I can already
see you're not good enough for me.

The Old Troll Hag walks back down the stairs. Grandpa shuts the door, baffled. *

GRANDPA
That was certainly strange.

<DING-DONG!> Grandpa opens the door again, this time
revealing a cute WATER NYMPH.

GRANDPA
Yes?

WATER NYMPH
Eww, old guy! At least tell me
you're rich.

She leans in, looking around.

WATER NYMPH
Never mind.

She exits, shutting the door behind her. Grandpa turns to
Jake, who struggles to contain a laugh.

GRANDPA
What a curious series of--

<DING DONG!> IN MONTAGE, we see the door opening on:

1) A FEMALE WEREWOLF gnawing at her own arm as if for fleas.

FEMALE WEREWOLF
I like long walks in the full
moonlight and <snarl, gnawing>

2) A FEMALE LEPRECHAUN - looking at a printout she holds. *

FEMALE LEPRECHAUN *
You looked taller in your picture. *

3) BIG BERTHA the giantess. She holds a smashed, opened, half-eaten box of candy, her face smeared with chocolate. *

BERTHA
Bertha bring chocolates!
(looks at the box)
Most of chocolates.

4) MAGICAL FEMALES of many breeds, fighting among themselves.

MAGICAL FEMALES
<fighting walla: "I was here first!" / "Get your own man!" / "Back off, sister!">

One of the ladies, a MIDDLE-AGED PIXIE, notices something in the apartment and points.

MIDDLE-AGED PIXIE
Oh, and that must be the wonderful, talented grandson you were raving about in your online bio! He's just as handsome as you described him!

REVERSE - Grandpa's face pops in surprise, then the burn of realization. Behind him, Jake smiles guiltily. He waves.

JAKE
Nice to meet you, ma'am. Heh.

GRANDPA
Jaaaaaaake!!

CUT TO:

INT. LONG APARTMENT - JAKE'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jake lies on his bed, gripping his pillow bitterly.

JAKE
Wack old man, no sense of humor...
Just trying to help a lonely, cranky, no-girlfriend-having brother out...

A distant, familiar <SCREECHING> snaps Jake out of his funk.

TREE ELVES (O.S.)
<distant screams>

JAKE
What the--? Dragon up!

Jake DRAGONS UP and flies out his window.

CUT TO:

EXT. JAKE'S NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Jake flies between apartment building towers, scanning the ground below.

TREE ELVES (O.S.)
<screams>

Jake zeroes in on the spot and dives down to:

TREE LEVEL - Where a handful of TREE ELVES are hopping from tree to tree, fleeing. Jake catches one in his hand.

TREE ELF #1
<terrified scream>

JAKE
Easy, little guy. What's going on?

TREE ELF #1
It attacked us out of nowhere!
Please save us!

JAKE
From what? What's out there?

TREE ELF #1
K-k-k... Kelpie!

The Tree Elf points to the direction all the elves were running from. Jake narrows his eyes, ready for action.

JAKE
Go catch up with your friends. The
AmDrag is on it.

*

Jake sets the elf down and flips down to:

STREET LEVEL - Jake sticks his landing into an action stance, looking around for the Kelpie.

JAKE
 <action noises> Yo, Kelpie! You
 wanna throw down the harsh? Bring
 it to the AmDrag, chump!

*

Jake stands at the ready, but nothing happens.

WIDER - KELPIE POV - from a nearby alley, the Kelpie watches
 Jake standing there, waiting.

KELPIE
 (sotto, to self)
 Draaaagon... <sniffs, smacks lips>
 I smell your power from here.

JAKE
 So that's how we play it, huh?
 Alright then. When you want it,
 you come get it.

KELPIE
 (sotto, to self)
 Soon, yes. Very soon. I build my
 power, find a way to strike from
 the inside...

*
*
*

NEW ANGLE - as Jake flies past the alley, the shadowed Kelpie
 oozes off into the darkness with another <SCREECH>.

CUT TO:

INT. LONG APARTMENT - JAKE'S ROOM

As Jake flies back into his window, he hears the muffled
 sounds of a man and woman laughing.

GRANDPA/PRINCIPAL DERCETO (O.S.)
 <warm laughter>

JAKE
 What the--? Gramps? And...
 (brightening)
 He found himself a lady!

Jake MORPHS back to human form and scrambles out the door to:

INT. LONG APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

ON THE DOOR TO JAKE'S ROOM - Jake flings the door open.

JAKE
Hey Gramps, who's the lucky--

REVERSE - Grandpa is serving tea to Principal Derceto.

JAKE
Principal Derceto?!

GRANDPA
Ah, Jake. We thought you had
fallen asleep.

JAKE
How did the website-- And you-- And
her--?

Derceto holds up the folder with Jake's permanent record.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO
I came to talk with your parents.
I know you said they were out of
town, but to be honest, I figured
you were lying. Sorry.

GRANDPA
No need to apologize. Jake often
has problems with dishonesty. Not
to mention discipline, focus, study
habits...

PRINCIPAL DERCETO
Tell me about it.

GRANDPA
Yes. Perhaps you would like to
discuss Jake's issues with me
instead. Say... over dinner?

Grandpa holds out a hand to Derceto.

TWO SHOT - Derceto, blushing, holds up her hand to take his.
Jake is horrified.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO
It's a date.

JAKE
NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!!

FADE OUT.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Jake, Trixie and Spud walk up to the school. Spud is inexplicably holding his breath, cheeks bulging.

TRIXIE

I think it's cute, Gramps going all old-school playa like that. He keeps this up, you're gonna have to call her "Principal Gramma."

JAKE

<ugh!> That is not even funny!

Spud collapses into frame, exploding with laughter.

SPUD

<spit into laugh> Principal Gramma!
(then, realizing)
Aw, you broke my groove! I was up to a minute forty-two!

TRIXIE

Spud, what are you doing?

Spud holds up a stopwatch.

SPUD

Timing how long I can hold my breath. I gotta practice if I'm gonna live down in Mermopolis.

JAKE

For the last time, Spud: it's a mermaid city. For mermaids.

SPUD

No! I belong there, and I can prove it! Time me! <deep inhale, then cough and a deep exhale> Wait, do-over. I breathed in a bug.

Trixie turns to Jake, ignoring Spud.

TRIXIE

You're frontin' way too negative on this, Jakey. You wanted your Gramps off your business. And you wanted to chill Derceto too, right? Well, now you've got 'em both taken care of!

A smile spreads across Jake's face.

JAKE

Yeah... maybe you're right!
They're gonna be so ga-ga-eyed for
each other, they'll have no time to
hassle me!

SMASH CUT TO:

In a series of QUICK CUTS:

1) SCHOOL - Derceto confronts Jake in the hall.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO

Jake! Your grandfather tells me
you did no homework last night!

2) LONG APARTMENT - Grandpa nabs Jake as he walks in.

GRANDPA

Jake! Dolores tells me you failed
another math quiz!

3) SCHOOL - Derceto holds two CDs in front of Jake.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO

Jake! Does your grandfather prefer
easy listening or smooth jazz?

4) LONG APARTMENT - Grandpa and Derceto cuddle on the couch.
As Jake tries to sneak past them:

GRANDPA

Jake! Go rent us a romantic movie
while we discuss your many
problems!

2) SCHOOL - Derceto confronts Jake on the front steps.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO

Jake! I believe your grandfather
sent something with you?

JAKE

<sigh> Yes, ma'am.

Jake takes a rose from his backpack and hands it to Derceto.

JAKE

(reluctantly)
For his... "sweet plum dumpling."

Surrounding students point and laugh. Jake is humiliated. *

STUDENTS *
<mocking laughter> *

CUT TO: *

INT. GRANDPA'S SHOP - REAR - NIGHT

Jake, Trixie and Spud sit around in Grandpa's shop. *

TRIXIE *
All right, so it didn't work out *
exactly like we thought. *

ON FU - back <TYPING> on his computer. *

FU DOG *
You mind keepin' it down, kids? I *
found me a cute French poodle named *
"La Betty 42," and ooh-la-la! *
Let's just say I'm using a lot of *
"semi-colon, capital B, end-
parentheses," if you catch my
drift.

Fu wags his eyebrows suggestively. Trixie, Spud and Jake *
shake their heads "no," lost. Fu points to the screen.

FU DOG
Doggie smiley face.

CLOSE ON THE COMPUTER SCREEN - lots of traded messages with a
"LABETE42," all peppered with " :B)" -- The CAMERA ROTATES so
the doggie smile emoticon is right-side up.

ON TRIXIE, SPUD AND JAKE - leaned over sideways to look at *
the smiley face. *

An O.S. <LOUD CRASH> distracts everyone. They all start to
move for the back door, but Jake holds them back.

JAKE
Let me check it out first.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND GRANDPA'S SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Jake rushes out into the dark alley - a single overhead bulb
illuminates him, can't see much beyond that.

JAKE

Hello?

VARIOUS ANGLES - FAUX POV SHOTS - of Jake alone in the darkness. We get the feeling something could jump out at him at any moment.

JAKE

Somebody out here?

And then it does: with a <HIGH-PITCHED WHINNY>, a UNICORN leaps into frame and charges right at Jake. He dives out of the way to avoid being trampled.

JAKE

<whoa!>

As the unicorn passes, Jake gets back to his feet and:

JAKE

Tail of the Dragon!

Jake's DRAGON TAIL grows out. He forms it into a lasso and ropes the unicorn in. The frightened creature <WHINNIES> and tries to get loose in its panic, dragging Jake along.

JAKE

Whoa, girl! <effort> What's--
<effort> gotten into you?

Jake pulls himself in close enough to notice a nasty-looking BITE MARK on the back of its neck. *

JAKE

Kelpie bite? *

Jake looks around, suddenly on the alert.

JAKE

Come on, now. You're okay. Looks
like you got away before he
finished feeding. Let's just get
you somewhere safe and-- *

A loud <SCREECHING> sends the unicorn back into a <WHINNYING> panic. It breaks free and flees into the darkness. Jake turns to face the noise, but before he can do anything, the front of Derceto's wheelchair <SCREECHES> into the light.

JAKE

Principal Derceto?

He re-absorbs his tail as Derceto fully enters the light.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO

Oh. Jake. I didn't know you were--
I didn't mean to scare you. I
think I rusted up a little.

*

She rolls back and forth, producing the <SCREECH>.

JAKE

What're you doing back here?

PRINCIPAL DERCETO

We just got back. I came out to
say goodnight.

(equally suspicious)

What are you doing back here?

ON JAKE - scrambling, busted.

JAKE

I-- I was just trying to calm
down... my stomach.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO

In the alley by the dumpsters?

JAKE

Uh, yeah. <breathes in> Ahh.

*

He <PATS> his stomach, then notices something and points.

*

JAKE

Is that seaweed on your chair?

*

Derceto looks down. She pulls out some SEAWEED stuck in the
spokes of her chair.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO

Yes, we... went to the beach.

*

GRANDPA (O.S.)

Oh, cherry blossom! I am waiting
for my goodnight hug! Or are you
interested in a lip-lock upgrade?

SPUD/TRIXIE (O.S.)

<disgusted noise>/ Yo, Gramps,
we're still here!

TWO SHOT - Jake and Derceto stare each other down, each not
trusting the other.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO

I'll see you in school on Monday.

JAKE

Yeah.

Derceto backs away, her wheels <SCREECHING>.

ON JAKE - something ain't right here.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LONG APARTMENT - JAKE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Jake lies in bed, sleeping restlessly. <ECHOED SOUNDS> fade in and out: the Kelpie's <SCREECH>, the unicorn's <WHINNY>, and the tree elves' <SCREAMS>...

JAKE

(mumbled, dreaming)

No... Look out...

...the sound of Grandpa and Derceto kissing...

GRANDPA/PRINCIPAL DERCETO (O.S.)

<kissing noises>

JAKE

(dreaming, disgusted)

Grandpa? Derceto? Come on, now...

...the kissing fades to more <SCREECHING>...

JAKE

(dreaming, now worried)

Grandpa?

He's really starting to toss and turn now, sweating buckets as the <SCREECHING SFX> get louder...

JAKE

Derceto?

...and louder. Suddenly, his eyes pop open.

JAKE

Derceto!

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOL - LATER THAT NIGHT

Jake, now fully dressed, stands next to Trixie, who's in her pajamas. They're both outside next to some bushes.

TRIXIE
<yawn> Derceto?

JAKE
She's the Kelpie! She showed up
out of nowhere a year ago, right?
Same time as the kelpie escaped.

TRIXIE
My new mailman showed up a year
ago, too. What's he? A gargoyle?

JAKE

It all fits, Trix! The screeching, the seaweed, how she keeps turning up right after the kelpie attacks, how she's always over at my place, getting all close to Gramps and me. <scoffs> Yeah, getting close enough to sneak a bite of Dragon the second we let our guard down.

WIDER - REVEAL Jake and Trixie are outside their school.

TRIXIE

Okay, maybe. But why are we out here bustin' into her office at skag-nasty-o'clock in the morning instead of telling your Gramps what you think is going on?

JAKE
Come on, girl. You think loverboy
Gramps is gonna listen to anything
I say without some kind of proof?

TRIXIE
All right, but one more question...

PAN TO INCLUDE SPUD, dressed all in black like a cat burglar.

TRIXIE
How come I had to get dragged outta
the house in my pajamas, but Spud
got to change into commando gear?

SPUD
Actually, these are my pajamas.
They help me dream I'm a ninja.

Off Trixie and Jake's deadpan looks:

WIPE TO:

INT. SCHOOL - PRINCIPAL DERCETO'S OFFICE - LATER

Jake shines a FLASHLIGHT BEAM over the murals in Derceto's office. *

JAKE
Fish tanks, blue walls, ocean murals... She's definitely got an underwater theme goin' on.

SPUD
Maybe some people just like mermaids! Is that a crime?

Trixie stands up from an open filing cabinet, holding a pair of rusted, broken handcuff chains, caked with seaweed, barnacles, etc.

TRIXIE
Check these out. Broken cuffs and chains.

Jake takes them, looks them over.

JAKE
Pretty rusted, lots of old sea junk on 'em. *

Spud leans in to sniff the cuffs. *

SPUD
<sniffs> Smells like the East River. Vintage last year. *

JAKE
Looks like somebody wanted to keep a souvenir of her breakout. *

Trixie's eyes go wide - maybe Jake is right. A sudden, nearby <SCREECHING> spooks them all out. *

JAKE
(whispered)
Go! *

The <SCREECHING> gets louder and closer as Spud, Trixie, then Jake climb onto Derceto's desk and out the window. Jake, last out and still holding the chain, knocks a lit DESK LAMP over on its side. *

The moment he's clear, Derceto wheels into the office. She looks at the open window, a very serious look on her face. *

HALLWAY - JUST OUTSIDE DERCETO'S OFFICE

The fallen desk lamp casts a shadow of Derceto (in her chair) against the wall. Suddenly, her SHADOW rises from the chair and moves out of view. The abandoned wheelchair <SCREECHES> out into the hall and <BUMPS> the opposite wall.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRANDPA'S SHOP - MORNING

ESTABLISHING - Grandpa's shop.

GRANDPA (O.S.)
(singing a made-up ditty)
Special lady/ Pretty lady...

INT. GRANDPA'S SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Grandpa fixes his hair and his fancy, steppin' out robes in front of a mirror. Jake, Trixie and Spud are behind him. Jake holds the broken chain.

GRANDPA
Don't say maybe/ Say yes to
Grandpa... <Chinese bass-talking
Barry White-esque breakdown>

JAKE
Yo! Cut the mic, G! This is
serious! Your girlfriend's the
Kelpie! This proves it!

He holds up the chain.

GRANDPA
A rusted, old chain proves nothing
but your own biases. I know you
must have issues with my dating
your principal, but such cheap
accusations are beneath us.

Grandpa heads for the door, leaving Jake, Trixie and Spud stunned.

GRANDPA
If you discover any real leads to
the Kelpie's whereabouts, I shall
be burning a mix CD for tonight.
<resumes Chinese bass breakdown>

Exit Grandpa.

TRIXIE
 (shaking her head)
 Mm-mm-mm. The things love will do
 to a man.

Fu crosses through, dressed in a dandified yachtsman getup.
 He talks into his cell phone.

FU DOG
 (phony blueblood accent)
 Alas, La Betty 42, my yacht is in
 the shop right now.
 (accent breaking down)
 Uh... no, you still can't come over
 and meet my Chinese butlers. I
 told you, they've got work to do!
 Stop askin' already!

*
 *
 *
 *

Exit Fu.

JAKE
 Looks like it's up to us.

TRIXIE/SPUD
 Mm-hmm./ Yeah... Uh, to do what
 exactly?

JAKE
 To trap Derceto and force her to
 reveal her true form...

TRIXIE/SPUD
 Say what?!/ Are you sick, bro?!

JAKE
 ...by bringing her back to prison
 in Mermopolis.

SPUD
 I'm in!

<SFX: DOOR KNOCKING>

CUT TO:

EXT. DERCETO'S WATERFRONT HOUSE - DUSK

A door swings open, revealing Jake.

JAKE
 Princey D! Whassup?!

*

REVERSE - Jake stands in front of a baffled Derceto.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO
 Jake? This is-- definitely a
 surprise.

WIDER - Derceto's house is a ramshackle one-story at the edge
 of the river. A FOG swirls in the fading sunlight.

JAKE
 Yeah, I just wanted to apologize
 for giving you and my Gramps such a
 hard time. So, you know, if you
 wanted to... come outside and talk.

TILT UP to include the roof, where Trixie and Spud are
 crouched and ready, each holding one end of a TUNA NET, ready
 to drop it the minute Derceto walks out the door.

ON DERCETO - her eyes dart briefly to the roof -- does she
 smell the trap?

PRINCIPAL DERCETO
 It's a little cold outside. Why
 don't you come in here?

JAKE - getting serious.

*

JAKE
 All right, let's cut the frontin'.

*

*

He pulls the rusted chain out from behind his back.
 Derceto's eyes go wide.

*

*

PRINCIPAL DERCETO
 Where did you get that?

*

*

JAKE
 Yeah, I know what you are. And
 exactly what you're trying to do.

*

*

*

Derceto reaches for the chain, but Jake steps back, dangling
 the chain tauntingly.

*

*

JAKE
 You want it back? Come'n get it.

*

*

Derceto's hands slowly move down to grip her chair's wheels.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO

All right. This doesn't have to
get ugly. Let's just talk about it
like-- <sudden action/effort>

*
*
*

Suddenly, Derceto lunges forward in her chair, plowing into
Jake and knocking him out of the way.

JAKE

Oof! Trix, Spud, drop it!

*

TRIXIE AND SPUD - drop the net, but Derceto's speed is
blazing. She clears the falling net, which traps Jake
instead. Derceto, meanwhile, is booking it for the river.

*
*
*

TRIXIE

She's going for the water!

Shrouded by the fog, Derceto rises from the chair and throws
herself into the water below.

ON JAKE - now he's ticked.

JAKE

No more running away, Kelpie.
DRAGON UP!

Jake DRAGONS UP, <RIPS> free of the net, and lifts off.

CUT TO:

EXT. EAST RIVER - UNDERWATER - MOMENTS LATER

The river is murky, hard to see more than a few feet away.
Dragon Jake <SPLASHES> down beneath the surface, holding his
breath. He looks around, trying to find Derceto.

JAKE'S POV - scanning around, stopping on a DARK MASS headed
straight for him, as if she's swimming up for a charging
attack.

JAKE - readies for a fight but--

JAKE'S POV - the mass comes into view, and it's actually a
LARGE RUSTED SHIP'S ANCHOR.

JAKE - barely swims out of the way as the anchor passes.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO (O.S.)

Yes, I know what you are, too!
Take whatever form you like, but
you're in my world now...

*

Jake looks around, trying to pinpoint where the voice is coming from.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO (O.S.)
And I'm not letting you leave it.

From behind Jake's back, Derceto charges in, <SLAMMING> into him, the momentum carrying them both up to--

SURFACE - CONTINUOUS

Jake's body breaks through to the surface just long enough to draw a breath...

JAKE
<gasp for breath>

Then he's dragged back:

UNDERWATER - CONTINUOUS

Obscured by darkness and the churned bubbles of their fighting, Jake and Derceto lock up and grapple underwater.

JAKE/PRINCIPAL DERCETO
<effort grunts>

Jake locks up one of Derceto's arms, but forgetting where he's at:

JAKE (W/UNDERWATER SFX)
HA! <mmph!>

Jake takes a mouthful of water with his triumphant laugh, then covers his mouth with his hand. Taking advantage, Derceto breaks free and swims away into the darkness.

JAKE - gets his game face back on and swims after.

Jake swims along in Derceto's wake, dodging fishing nets and other obstacles. He's starting to catch up, when a POWERBOAT cuts in front of him, <CHURNING> up the water fiercely.

Jake looks around - she's gone. But when he turns behind him-

<SMACK!> Swatted back hard, he goes flying up and <THUNKS> the back of his head against the underside of a BUOY.

SURFACE - CONTINUOUS

Jake comes up for air in front of the buoy.

JAKE
<taking in air, then pain groan>

*

JAKE'S POV - Derceto is swimming right for him, cutting through the water like Jaws (only her upper body should be visible).

JAKE - looks up behind him, then, just as Derceto is about to hit him, Jake throws his arms back, grabs the metal latticework of the buoy, and yanks the whole thing forward, trapping Derceto in the metalwork.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO
<impact grunt>

JAKE
Gotcha! And the catch of the day
is... fresh ugly Kelpie!

Derceto struggles, trying to get free.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO
<effort> What are you talking
about?! You're the kelpie!

JAKE
Say what?!

PRINCIPAL DERCETO
You can't run forever! I'm not the
only mermaid who's after you!

JAKE
Mermaid--?

And now, for the first time, we see Derceto's MERMAID TAIL
<THRASHING> in the water.

ON JAKE - realizing the mistake he's made.

JAKE
Aw, man!

FADE OUT.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. EAST RIVER - SURFACE - NIGHT

Jake pulls the buoy's metal bars apart enough for Derceto to slip out. He rests on the buoy, she in the water, as the two talk the confusion out.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO

I was one of the mermaid detectives sent out to find the escaped Kelpie. I thought it might be you. The way I kept finding you every place the beast attacked, the "changes" you said you'd gone through in the past year... I thought the real Jake Long had been eaten and replaced. It's the perfect cover, really.

JAKE

But what about those chains we found when we broke into your office?

*

PRINCIPAL DERCETO

Evidence I picked up on the-- You broke into my office?!

*

*

JAKE

I thought you were trying to eat me and Gramps!

*

*

ON JAKE - taking with a sudden, horrible realization.

JAKE

Oh, no...! Gramps!

*

CUT TO:

INT. GRANDPA'S SHOP - REAR - NIGHT

*

Grandpa paces in front of Fu Dog and his French poodle date, "LABETE42," who never takes her eyes off of Grandpa.

*

GRANDPA

Where is she? Dolores promised she would be here by now.

*

*

FU DOG

Hey, I hear ya. Lies can totally ruin a relationship.

*

*

(MORE)

FU DOG (cont'd)
 That's why La Betty 42 and me
 agreed to drop the charade and be
 totally honest. Ain't that right,
 sweetie?

*
 *
 *

LABETE42
 (to Fu)
 Go get me a drink.

FU DOG
 Right away, babycakes!

Fu hurries O.S. as Grandpa stops pacing.

*

GRANDPA
 I should call her.

ON GRANDPA - as he picks up the phone, "LaBete42" rises into the frame behind him, eyeing him hungrily. Grandpa turns to see her there.

GRANDPA
 Hmm? Oh, it's you, La Betty 42.
 (points)
 The rest room is down the hall.

PAN TO remove "LaBete42" from the frame. Grandpa dials the phone. O.S. <SLOSHING, GARGLING NOISES>.

GRANDPA
 Do you mind, La Betty 42? I'm
 trying to--

Grandpa turns, and we PAN BACK TO INCLUDE THE KELPIE standing right behind Grandpa.

GRANDPA
 <Chinese exclamation>

The Kelpie <SCREECHES>. Grandpa transforms into a dragon, but before he can act, the Kelpie <SWATS> him with its webbed hand, knocking him cold to the floor.

WIDER - Fu comes back in, carrying a drink tray.

*

FU DOG
 I hope you like your tap water
 warm, baby, cause--
 (noticing)
 Yaaah! When I said you could slip
 into something a little more
 comfortable...

The Kelpie <SCREECHES> and swats Fu into a wall.

FU DOG
<impact grunt>

KELPIE
And now the feasting...

The Kelpie picks up Grandpa's limp arm and bites, starting to drain Grandpa Dragon's life force.

GRANDPA
<weak pain grunts>

WINDOW - Jake flies in, holding Derceto.

JAKE
Yo! My Gramps is not a combo platter!

The Kelpie turns its head to the window and <SCREECHES>. Jake drops Derceto to the ground and flies at the Kelpie.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO
Jake, no! He's absorbed your grandfather's power!

As Jake flies in, the Kelpie turns to face him, MORPHING in mid-swing into GRANDPA DRAGON and <CRACKING> Jake with a vicious TAILWHIP.

JAKE - goes flying back, <CRASHING> through the wall to:

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND GRANDPA'S SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Jake <SLAMS> into a group of WATER PIPES, <BURSTING> them open. WATER <SPRAYS> everywhere.

JAKE
<impact grunt>

ON THE WALL OF GRANDPA'S SHOP - the Kelpie Dragon steps through the hole Jake's body made.

KELPIE
I told you I would find a way inside, Dragon. Now your power will be mine. <lip-smacking noise>

The Kelpie Dragon licks its lips with its DRAGON TONGUE, then <MORPHS> into the UNICORN we saw earlier. It <SCREECHES> and charges Jake, horn lowered.

ON JAKE - dazed, holding the back of his head.

JAKE
<groan, then surprised yell>

*
*

He looks up to see the Kelpie Unicorn charging. Jake rolls out of the way, and the Kelpie Unicorn <PUNCHES> its horn through the wall behind him, getting stuck.

*
*
*

INT. GRANDPA'S SHOP - REAR - CONTINUOUS

*

Derceto pulls herself over to Grandpa, who's coming to.

GRANDPA
<groan>

PRINCIPAL DERCETO
Lao Shi! Are you all right?

GRANDPA
(groggy)
Dolores?

He looks down and takes with surprise momentarily at her mermaid lower body. Then he smiles playfully.

GRANDPA
Nice fin.

She smiles back, looking over his Dragon form.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO
Nice... everything. Can you move?

*

GRANDPA
<effort> Too weak. I can't--

*
*

The Kelpie's <SCREECH> draws their focus to:

*

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND GRANDPA'S SHOP - CONTINUOUS

*

The Kelpie Unicorn <SCREECHES> as it tries to free itself. Jake hops onto its back.

*
*

JAKE
Yo yo, cowboy! Check the AmDrag
ridin' bareback!

The Kelpie Unicorn tries to buck Jake off, but failing that, it MORPHS down out of sight. Jake hits the pavement.

*

JAKE
<impact>

Jake looks around, confused - can't see anything. *

ON THE BROKEN PIPES - the Kelpie (now a tiny TREE ELF) <RIPS> *
off a small length of broken pipe and leaps toward Jake's *
head, <SCREECHING>, brandishing the pipe like a baseball bat. *

PRINCIPAL DERCETO (O.S.) *
Jake, look out! *

DERCETO'S FIN - swings up and <WHAPS> the Kelpie Elf away. *

KELPIE
<pain yell>

WIDER - Derceto slides up to Jake's side on the water-slicked *
alley floor. *

JAKE *
Thanks. *

PRINCIPAL DERCETO *
(shrugging) *
They outlawed corporal punishment *
at school. I have to get my *
aggression out somehow. *

The Kelpie Elf <SCREECHES> in anger at them. Jake looks *
down, spots it, and snatches it up, trapping it inside his *
DRAGON CLAWS like a mini cage. *

JAKE *
Gotcha! *

He holds the Kelpie Elf up to his face. *

JAKE *
Who's your mack daddy now, tiny? *

The Kelpie Elf MORPHS into a LARGE TROLL, bursting free of *
Jake's claw prison as it shoots up in size. *

JAKE *
Aw, man! When did he eat a troll? *

THE KELPIE TROLL - <SCREECHES> and raises a fist to pound *
Jake and Derceto, but-- *

SPUD (O.S.) *
Back, you scuzzbeast! *

ON THE ALLEY - Spud stands dramatically in a homemade MERMAID *
COSTUME, his lower body encased in a SPARKLING FIN. Trixie *
holds him up by his armpits.

SPUD

You mess with one mermaid, you mess
with us all!

*

TRIXIE

(to Jake)

He said he wouldn't come unless we
stopped to get his costume.

*

*

SPUD

I sewed it myself! I used sequins
for scales, and--

Another <SCREECH>, and the Kelpie Troll is now charging Spud
and Trixie.

*

SPUD

Quick, Trixie! Hold me up so I can
slap that punk with my mighty fin!
Higher! Higher!

Trixie struggles to lift Spud, but Jake flies in to save the
day, KUNG-FU KICKING and PUNCHING the Kelpie Troll. The
Troll gets in a good <SWAT> that sends Jake to the ground.
Derceto slides up to him.

*

*

*

PRINCIPAL DERCETO

We're never going to beat him if he
keeps changing form like that!
He's countering every move we make!

*

*

*

*

JAKE

Then I guess I gotta convince him
to stay put for a little while.
Check it, I got a plan...

*

*

*

*

ON THE KELPIE TROLL - Spud is lying down by its feet, weakly
kicking at it with his finned legs. Trixie stands back,
watching in disbelief.

*

*

*

SPUD

<with puny effort grunts> Taste!
My! Mermaid! Fury!

*

*

*

TRIXIE

Oh this is all you, playa.

*

*

JAKE (O.S.)

Yo! Scared to take me on as
yourself, chump?

*

*

*

The Kelpie looks up to see Jake approaching.

*

JAKE

Or are you as weak as you are ugly?

*

The Kelpie Troll <SCREECHES>, then, as it transforms back into its normal Kelpie form:

*

KELPIE

Yesssss... A meal like dragon
deserves to be consumed with my own
teeth...

Jake charges toward the Kelpie, but slips on the slick pavement and takes a hard fall.

*

*

JAKE

<whooooaa, then impact>

*

*

ON TRIxie AND SPUD - shocked concern.

*

TRIXIE/SPUD

Jakey!/ No!

*

*

Derceto comes up behind them and motions for them to come with her.

*

*

ON JAKE AND THE KELPIE - Jake's not moving. Seeing opportunity, the Kelpie pounces onto Jake's chest.

*

*

KELPIE

Yesss! I feed on young, strong
dragon!!

*

*

*

The Kelpie strikes with its head to take a bite. But as it bites down, Jake swings up a length of broken pipe in front of the Kelpie's mouth, <CRUNCHING> its teeth.

*

*

*

KELPIE

<pain howl>

*

*

JAKE - opens his eyes, smiling.

*

JAKE

How ya like my flava now, punk?
(calling O.S.)
Derceto, go!

*

*

*

*

ON THE ALLEY - Derceto lies on her belly on the waterlogged pavement. Trixie and Spud each hold one of her arms. In unison, they slingshot her forward, down the slick alley.

*

*

*

PRINCIPAL DERCETO

<charging yell>

*

*

ON THE KELPIE - it looks up, but it's too late. Derceto
slides/swims to plow right into the Kelpie, <SLAMMING> it
hard into the wall and knocking it unconscious. *

KELPIE *

<hard impact> *

WIDE - Jake, Trixie and Spud come up beside Derceto to watch
the Kelpie slump to the ground. *

TRIXIE *

(to Derceto) *

I am so gonna need some extra *

credit for this. *

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BASE OF THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE - MORNING

Jake, Trixie, Spud, Fu, Grandpa and Derceto watch as the
Kelpie -- trapped back in chains -- is lowered beneath the
water in a transport bubble. *

FU DOG

For the record, sweetie, this whole
Kelpie thing isn't a deal breaker!
Drop me an e-mail when you get
settled!

ON JAKE, DERCETO AND GRANDPA - an intimate moment.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO

I'm sorry I misjudged you, Jake.

JAKE

Me, too. And I just want you to
know, if you and Gramps want to,
you know... get serious... I'm cool
with that.

DERCETO - blushes. This is an uncomfortable moment for her.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO

Oh. I-- I assumed you'd know--

GRANDPA - nods, getting it.

GRANDPA

(to Jake)

Now that the Kelpie has been
captured, Detective Derceto must
take a new undercover assignment.

JAKE

What?! But that's not fair! You
and her-- They can't--

*

GRANDPA

No, it isn't fair. But sometimes
the needs of others must come
before our own, young dragon.

*

*

*

Jake looks like he finally gets it. Grandpa turns to
Derceto.

GRANDPA

And so, I guess this is--

REVEAL Spud clutched to Derceto's back like a piggyback ride.

SPUD

Take me with you? I'll be good and
I can help fight underwater crime
and I can hold my breath for like
two and a half minutes now, please?

Derceto gives Grandpa one last smile.

PRINCIPAL DERCETO

Goodbye.

GRANDPA

Farewell, my cherry blossom.

Derceto leaps into the water, Spud still hanging on her back.

SPUD

I can't believe it! I'm really
going! Wheeeee--<blub blub blub>

Derceto and Spud disappear under the water. A short beat
later, and Spud surfaces, gasping for air.

SPUD

<gasp> Wait, do-over! I breathed
in a minnow!

ON THE SHORE - Jake and Trixie each put a comforting arm
around Grandpa, who watches the water sadly.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SCHOOL - PROFESSOR ROTWOOD'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Jake, Trixie and Spud shuffle into class.

JAKE

Can you believe this? I totally got away with not having Derceto talk to my parents! And now that there's gonna be a new principal, I get a whole new clean slate!

*

Rotwood enters, a bit flustered.

PROFESSOR ROTWOOD

Students, I have the sad duty to inform you that due to the disorder caused by Ms. Derceto's sudden departure, I will no longer be able to serve as your teacher.

*

JAKE/TRIXIE/SPUD/STUDENTS

<surprised, happy walla: No way!/
Heard that!/
Awesome!>

PROFESSOR ROTWOOD

Yes, yes, very sad. Unfortunately, there will be no time now that I've been chosen to be... your new principal! Ta-daa!

JAKE/TRIXIE/SPUD/STUDENTS

<shocked walla: What?!/
Say it ain't so, playa!/
No way!>

Rotwood takes out a BERET bedazzled with the word "PRINCIPAL" and puts it on, modeling it for the class.

PROFESSOR ROTWOOD

I had to special order the beret. Not official principal wear, but what do you think? Classy, no?

ON JAKE - hit by a bombshell.

JAKE

Aw, maaaaan!

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW